Okay. So it actually does follow on pretty well from Christine’s presentation just a second ago, which was mostly the aspect of it is the safe learning environment which is what I’m really interested in, in terms of the courses that I teach.

So my focus is first year teaching in the Bachelor of Information Technology and I teach software development and computer architecture, so technical content, maths, quite challenging for a lot of the students. The OP cut off for the Bachelor of Information Technology is about 17 with most of the students 13 or above. So there’s some challenges.

I’m constantly learning new ways to improve my teaching. And also trying to implement what I learn. Right. So my aim is to try and empower students to participate in the learning process and to gain some ownership of it. And I want to use feedback to do that, and their feedback to me.

So I want to improve my teaching and also encourage student engagement and when I want to improve my teaching, when I make changes I want to know do they actually work. And I want to know that really quickly. Alright. So I need regular high quality feedback from the students and I ask for that. I also want to encourage students to participate and I want them to be able to feel free to give me feedback whenever and wherever, as often as possible, so I get the benefit of their participation. I also want to acknowledge their feedback so once they give it to me I want them to know that I got it and that I’m doing something about it.

So the problem that I ran into was well how do I get the feedback that I need. Right. SECs and SETs are really good for a lot of different purposes but they’re not timely. And I’m impatient and I want it now. And I’ve tried a few other things. One of them that you might be familiar with is the Harvard [0:01:47.5] Paper, which is great. It’s a paper based way to collect information about a particular topic. Really useful. But when I’ve tried it, it takes about ten minutes for me to implement that and that’s’ too long in a lecture. So once I get the information back I still have to process it and that can be time consuming too. And then I have to give the feedback back to the students, right, so there’s a delay there. And running this regularly, well students are already over surveyed, or at least that’s what they tell me. So doing one more of these formal processes every week it’s too much for them.

So how do I acknowledge the feedback and engage students? Again the SECs and SETs for the students it’s too late. They give the feedback which is great, but they don’t get
feedback on that until much, much later. The Harvard [0:02:32.0] Paper is better but it still takes at least a week for me to get back to them in terms of what’s just happened.

So what I did was I took the Harvard [0:02:42.1] Paper and I adapted it a little bit and at the end of each lecture I basically asked three feedback questions. Now the way I do that is to open up a word document in front of the lecture, and I ask the questions, I get responses, and I type in their answers as they give them to me. So what they see is me receiving the feedback, and then I can address it at that point if need to, or I can give the timeframe on when I’m going to address it. But the basic idea is that they see their feedback impacting me.

The kinds of questions that I’m asking, they vary but the three that I’m working on at the moment are: what was the least useful, what was the most useful, and what was the least clear aspect of any part of the course. I had feedback on those questions too from the students, and they told me the first set were no good. So I fixed them up. Which was an interesting aspect of that feedback process.

I might ask follow up questions too to find out why people feel the way that they do, and also how many students in the class feel the same way, just to get a feel for is this an accurate reflection of the student feeling.

The benefits: well there’s two different sets of benefits. There are benefits for me and also benefits for the students. And for me I get immediate feedback, which is great. I can address anything immediately or I can give them a timeframe and say “Look I can’t do it now, but this is going to be implemented at some time in the future”. It takes really little time to administer. There’s almost no preparation and I invite you guys to try something like this in your very next class. You can do it in two minutes. It doesn’t take much time. Also what I’ve noticed is that students with this safety environment, they feel safe to actually give feedback and they become more interested in participating, which is a really good outcome.

For the students: well they get to give regular feedback, which they don’t necessarily get to do in a lot of courses. It allows them to influence how the course is delivered, at least to some extent. I acknowledge the feedback so they know it’s been received. And it doesn’t feel like a formal survey, so we don’t over survey them.

The outcomes in terms of success: well I trialled this first time semester one last year, and I’ve been doing it since then but for that particular course this is the first instance of it. For the SEC text responses, just on top of getting good feedback from the process itself, the SEC text responses 11 out of the 23 of those explicitly mentioned that process as being the most valuable for their learning. They really liked it. All the mean scores for that course, which had reasonable but not as good as they could be scores, they increased for that semester, and that’s been continuing through the courses I’ve been running too. And the mean for the SEC question: “Overall how effective was the course in helping to learn?” rose by six points, which is a pretty good improvement.
And there’s some sample comments down the bottom. My favourite one out of those is the bottom one: “I liked how the course was somewhat adapted in the sense that as feedback from students was provided the course was altered slightly. It was improved for the students”.

Thank you.

[Applause]